



**STATE OF VERMONT**  
**Department of Education**  
**120 State Street**  
**Montpelier, VT 05620-2501**

## **Education Commissioner, State Board Articulate Vision for Education**

**MONTPELIER** – The following message from State Board Chair Tom James and Commissioner Richard Cate was released today by the Vermont Department of Education:

**To: Vermonters**  
**From: Tom James, State Board of Education Chair**  
**Richard H. Cate, Commissioner**  
**Date: October 12, 2007**  
**Re: The Future of Education in Vermont**

We are writing to announce the beginning of a public engagement process about the future of education in Vermont. The State Board of Education and Department of Education staff are asking for your assistance and inviting you to participate in this process. The attached document represents a starting point for this conversation. This description of a desired state of education represents our work over the past few months, including the public input received at the September State Board meeting. Although we have worked hard to clearly articulate a vision for the desired state of education, we view this document as the starting point for a conversation with a wide range of people. We are seeking your input so that we can eventually develop a desired state document that reflects the consensus opinion of Vermonters.

We need to stress that, for the next several months, we want to frame a conversation about the desired components of a transformed education system. The discussion about how we should get there will come later. In this document, we used the term *transformation* when describing what we want to accomplish, because it is important that we recognize all of the good work that is ongoing in our education system. Yet we believe that, in order to adequately prepare our children for the world that awaits them, we must make some significant changes to that system.

The staff of the Department of Education participated this week in facilitated small group discussions about this topic. Much of the time on the next few State Board monthly meeting agendas will be dedicated to similar conversations between State Board members, Department staff and representatives of various constituent groups. The first of these meetings will occur on October 16<sup>th</sup>, first with a group of students and then with a group of parents. Future meetings will include teachers, superintendents, principals, school board members, legislators and other political leaders, representatives of the business community and other constituent groups. We are also planning a multi-day summit to which representatives of all of these groups will be invited.

Commissioner Cate will also be conducting regional meetings with students around the

state. This public engagement process will evolve beyond what we have described as we proceed throughout the year.

We hope that many of you will join us in this effort as we focus our efforts on strategies to help all students to be successful. Thank you.

The State Board of Education October 16<sup>th</sup> meeting will be held in Room 11 of the Vermont Statehouse. The complete agenda and packet materials can be found online at:  
<http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/board/schedule.html>.

*The Future of Education in Vermont* can be found at:  
<http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/mainboard.html#vision>.